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LITERARY.

THE MAGIC ROSE.

A TRUE STORY.

Written expressly for the Banner of Progress.

BY FANNY GREEN M'DOUGAL.

[CONCLUDED.]

"To speak more plainly," I continued, "I allow myself an occasional luxury; and to give a trifle to those who seek help, by which they may, by-and-by, come to help themselves, is the form in which I best like to have it. I take a cheap house over the river, that I may be more independent, and, at the same time, more economical in the arrangement of those affairs. I have found opportunity to provide honest business for quite a number, who would, otherwise, have been vagrants. I have a small manufactory of cheap hats, in which I employ those I wish to serve until I can get them situated more to their mind. By this means they can provide themselves with decent clothing, while, at the same time, I lose nothing; for I make a fair profit on their labor. The work is very simple and easily learned; and I can find a market for more of the article than I can produce. A respectable matron superintends the whole establishment. I have a nurse for the sick, and one for infants. I am quite a patriarch, I assure you."

"O, this is, indeed, true charity!" she exclaimed, grasping my hand with a fervor for which I was quite unprepared. "Only let us have work—honest work—no matter what!" she shouted out, "and we will bless you forever!"

"At present, madam, you need rest and refreshment; but all will come right in due time."

"Don't take on so, mother, dear!" said Mary. "See! little Johnny thinks the gentleman is going to hurt you;" for the little fellow, frightened at his mother's cries and tears, was screaming lustily.

"Do you feel able to be moved to-day?" I asked. "If I could endure staying here I might surely bear anything!" she replied, looking round with a shudder.

"Very well," I returned. "In two hours from this I will be here with a carriage, and Mrs. Franklin, my housekeeper, will bring such garments as you, and Mary, and the little one may need for the present. She always keeps a supply. A precious woman she is, as you and Mary will find her. And pray, madam, give me your name, that I may be able to introduce you."

"It is Blanding," she replied; "Elizabeth Blanding."

"That is, I believe, a New England name," I remarked.

"It is so," she replied. "I came from Fitchburg, Massachusetts, a beautiful town about midway between Worcester and Lowell."

"Ah! indeed! it is very curious, and very pleasant, too! I am a native of Groton, an adjoining town," I responded.

Upon this, we fell into a comparison of notes; and it was surprising to find how many people were acquainted with both of us.

BROOKLYN, April 2, 1835.—Mrs. Blanding was brought home more than a month ago. We have found proper and becoming garments for all the family. It is certainly rather teasing to a bachelor to look on so much beauty and loveliness, and then look back again to his own lonely state. Lonely, indeed! Am I so? Who has a larger number of bright and graceful faces around him than I have? My business, too, is thriving. Everything I undertake seems to flourish; and even this charity affair, in which I anticipated nothing short of a downright bill of expense, turns out to be the most profitable investment of all. Somehow or other, I always happen to invest in exactly the right kind of stocks. And being such a lucky fellow myself, I can well afford to give a helping hand to the many unfortunate who throng around us.

Still I must not think of marrying yet. And why should I be thinking of it now? Have I not taken, as it were, vows of celibacy, that no family burdens may interfere with what I believe to be my life-mission? And yet, a good wife, instead of pulling me back, might help me on wonderfully. I have found myself so happy, with Johnny on my knee, and Mary reading by my side, that the arrangement seems like a natural and essential one. By the way, she is bright and intelligent, and must be properly educated. Possibly, only about fifteen years' difference, I find. Fie! what fiend is at my elbow prompting me with vain and idle thoughts!

I must quit this writing, for I see I am not likely to get out of a certain train of reflections by any other means. And, besides, I have a proposition to make to Mrs. Blanding. I will not suffer my selfishness to delay it any longer. She, too, has promised to give me her history this evening. How much she improves on acquaintance. And Mary, too; she is a bewitching little thing, shy and delicate as a wood dove; and yet, in her simplicity and innocence, so confiding—so charmingly sweet and lovely, I almost forget she is, as yet, nothing but a child. I heard her tell Johnny this morning how well she loved me. She was teaching him to pray for me. I saw, as she held up his little hands between her own, that they were really growing quite plump with his better fare.

All this is charming; and when I entered the room suddenly, and, clasping my arms around both together, asked her if she really did love me as well as she said, she blushed a little, at first, and then kissed me, so modestly, so gently, saying, at the same time, "I should be very wicked if I did not," that I was better pleased than ever; and yet there was something in her manner that quite puzzled me. Looking up into my eyes with that earnest expression for which her own are so remarkable, she added, very gently, "I almost think I should love you

as well as mother and little Johnny, if I had known you so long. There will never be anybody else I shall love half as well as you."

And then, after a little pause, as if looking at the question all round, she added, naively, "If I should be married ever so many times, I should not! She will forget all the one of these days, when some younger and finer fellow makes his appearance. Ah! well, such a result would be only natural; yet why should I be thinking of it?"

April 3.—I visited Mrs. Blanding last evening, in her own rooms, claiming a recital of the history she had promised me. Johnny was on one knee, and Mary, as usual, sat by my side.

"My story is very simple," she said, blushing with a modesty that quite charmed me. "I have nothing of the heroine, either in my character or history. My father was a farmer in comfortable circumstances; but he became afflicted with the mania of speculation in Eastern lands. It proved to be unfortunate; and he lost nearly everything he had. Soon after his health gave way under the chagrin of disappointment, and he died suddenly. There were two brothers and two sisters of us all, well and strong. We worked with a good heart, and as long as our mother was spared, kept the family together. But she only survived her husband two years. We then separated. My brothers had earned enough to purchase a small tract of land in the West, where they soon after removed. My sister was married and went to Bangor, and I took a school in the village."

"In the course of a year I, too, got married. My husband was not only a respectable man, but, in all things, a true man. He was, in fact, far too honest for those about him. He had an unfortunate propensity for trading in horses, cattle, lands, the produce of his farm—in short, everything that could be made an article of barter; and in every bargain he came off second best. He was constantly surrounded by a set of sharpers; but he never saw his error in any particular case till it was too late to retrieve himself. He often mourned over his folly; but the propensity was too strong to be overcome. In this way he became much involved; and finally, as the worst and last move, he was persuaded to come to New York, where he followed the carting business, the cart and horses, and a little furniture, being the sole remains of his once fair acres."

"I need not prolong the story. He got discouraged—fell into bad company, and, at length, into bad ways. He had a severe fit of sickness, and, after that, was a wholly different man. I do believe, if he had lived, he would have wholly reformed. But the blow was struck. He died, and left us, just before Johnny was born. I never recovered from the shock; but for a time I supported us all tolerably well by needlework, both plain and ornamental, as I could get it. But my strength failed. I sold out everything after another, and moved into worse and worse places, until I came to be as you found me."

"You cannot think how much anxiety I have suffered on Mary's account. I had always been used to as good society as there was—at least so long as I had any; and to think of the wretchedness she was sent forth among, unprotected and alone as she was! Sometimes I have knelt over her, and prayed that she might die—that we might all die—until I would sink down, from utter exhaustion, and fall asleep on my knees. O, I thought, if I could be once more in the green fields—if I could only have the pure air, the sweet, innocent singing birds, and the springing flowers around me, I would not so much mind being hungry! But the wickedness and filth I have seen are horrible, even to think of!"

"I want words to tell you what a comfort that child has been to me," she continued, as the door opened softly, and closed again, for as soon as she came in, she spoke of Mary, the child, with a real modesty, an instinctive delicacy, which seems to be the most beautiful trait in her character, rose and left the room. "She has earned a little money, one way and another, very frequently; for everybody seems to take to Mary! And she is so sweet-tempered and hopeful! I should have given up a thousand times if it had not been for her. It does seem as if my prayers had been answered; for I do not think she has been corrupted by all the wickedness she has seen, any more than if she were an angel from heaven."

"She is all the purer—all the better for it," I replied, "as gold is finer for being tried in the crucible. But I have a plan to propose. My sister, now living in Groton, has commissioned me to find some one to assist in her family, as companion and friend rather than a servant. Johnny is such a sweet little fellow, he will certainly be no objection; and as for Mary, she would be useful in the family a thousand ways, with her intelligence and activity. Besides, there is an excellent academy there; and her talents deserve better treatment than they have yet had. On the whole, madam, I think it is a situation that cannot fail to please you all. With a complete self-dependence you will soon be happier, and stronger, every way; I am sure, too, you will all like my sister. She is a refined, intelligent, excellent, and lovable woman."

I pass over the remainder, only promising that the arrangement was made. BROOKLYN, May 2.—Just returned from Groton, where I left this little family, in which I take such a wonderful interest. They all wept at parting with me—even the lisping little Johnny. How lonely it is here! Indeed, it seems as if the better half of me were missing. Man, after all, was made a social and domestic animal; and a bachelor is but a sorry representative of either.

October 7, 1839.—Here is a letter from Mary—a large sheet, crowded full. How much she improves, both in style and penmanship! It is written on her birthday, too! Is it possible she is sixteen? She has now been at Groton four years; and the best accounts of her come from all quarters. They are to have their annual exhibition at the academy very

soon, she says. It must be there and give them a surprise; for they will expect me. Let me see! Looking at the date again, I find the usual dramatic entertainment comes off to-morrow evening. Thanks to the steam angel, I shall have plenty of time. They are to represent the "Search after Happiness," and to see Mary as Florella will be worth the journey.

November 3.—I am just returned from the country. I should like to write what I think of Mary now—how unspeakably beautiful and lovely she is—how her intellect has developed as well as her person. But she has grown shy and bashful. She never kisses me but when I ask her; and then she seems almost unwilling! Ah! it is as I feared. She no longer loves me as she once did. I have grown to be a stranger. Why did I ever send her away?

They were already gone to the academy when I arrived at my sister's; and, having obtained supper, I set off, determining to find a back seat, and keep quiet until after the performance. As I entered, a group of girls, in one of the dancing exercises of calisthenics, occupied the stage. And one of them—how shall I describe her? Sylph, fairy, angel, and a host of vague terms, expressing but little of what I saw in Mary—Mary! And what was very remarkable, she had in her girlish one single flower, a white bridal rose. In tint, shape, size, and degree of unfolding, it was a perfect facsimile of the mysterious blossom I had seen on the memorable morning when I first found her. Nay! I fancied that it breathed on me the same odorous magnetism, calling forth, as it were, a second sight; for suddenly I saw the rose-bush of my vision, perfect in all respects, set in the extreme distance behind her; and the rose-lips seemed to speak as before, saying, "I am yours; come and take me."

But the dance was finished and the play begun; and in the confusion of the change I thought I had lost my rose-bush; but if it disappeared it soon returned; and there it stood all the evening. I was perplexed—almost distressed—because I felt an inexplicable significance that haunted me continually. A great life-crisis was impending. But what should or could it be?

I sought refuge from these perplexing questions by entire engrossment with my beautiful Mary. There was something so aerial in her motions—so spirit-like in her expression, I almost doubted, at times, if she could be genuine flesh and blood, even as other women. And Florella! She so entered into the spirit of that sweetest character in the piece, you could have sworn it was a real shepherdess you saw. The conception of Hannah More's ideal was perfect. It was her Florella—gentle, delicate, tender, thoughtful. Her dress, too, was singularly becoming; for good taste is a principle of her nature. A white muslin frock, cut with a sweep, open at the neck, and like the under-skirt, trimmed around with sprigs of the beautiful little evergreen, known in New England as the ground pine, made the dress. A green sash, a flat hat, trimmed with a garland of blush roses, and a crook delicate enough to be a fairy wand, decorated with evergreens and roses, completed the array. It was all charming.

And I have taken leave of her now; ay, of them; for I seem to forget that there are others in the family; and they so well and happy too! I may not see them again for years, perhaps. My business calls me to Europe. It is doubtful when I may return; and I may never. But if I do not, all is, I trust, arranged as it should be.

BROOKLYN, June 11, 1843.—At home once more, after an absence of nearly four years; but the place no longer deserves its name. It is, indeed, insufferably irksome. The loneliness oppresses me. How is it that a child, whose years number little more than half the measure of mine, has wound herself into my affections? I do most certainly deserve to be miserable for my great folly. Her letters bespeak a richly gifted as well as a richly stored mind. She is truly a gem. Sometimes I almost think she loves me. But no; it cannot be. She was quite a child when I went away; and she would never think of me in any other light than that of a father. But what does this mysterious rose-tree mean? During my absence it has frequently appeared, and by comparing dates and notes with passages in her letters, I find that it has always truly symbolized to me her present condition. For instance, while she was suffering with the scarlet fever, it appeared for the most part of a glowing fire-red. I felt a sensible heat from it; and so strong was the impression, that I half unconsciously said to myself, "This is fever."

If at any time she had been ill, I saw the sweet flower drooping; if unusually well and successful in achievement, it bore itself elate, and breathed sweet breaths of health and strength. Then, again, it would seem a conscious embodiment of love, whispering sweet, broken sentences of rapturous, or even passionate emotion. What is this mysterious association between her and the rose? Is it her Flower-Soul? As man is an epitome of all things, he must have a spirit corresponding with each and every class of material forms, because he holds within himself the substance which envelops and radiates it. I can easily see the analogy of such a being as Mary to flowers and gems; but I cannot so well accept the particular teaching which this beautiful symbol seems to indicate. Representing, as it evidently does, her life, her spirit, her affections, it tells but one story. If it says anything, it says clearly and emphatically, "I love you."

I have struggled hard to resist this intimation. I have repelled it constantly; and yet it obtrudes itself. Am I possessed by a most silly demon, who would fain persuade me of a thing that stands against reason and common sense? And what is this mystical power that enthralms me? Is there, then, a literal truth in the theory of Socrates, and other ancients, who believed in an attending demon, or spirit? I, for one, am inclined to believe it. I myself have seen and heard things which admit of no other explanation. Certain it is that we live on the very

borders of a world of mystery—the great Shadow-Land that hides such marvelous things in its dark profound. Why should we not sometimes feel the vibrations and hear the echoes of forms and forces which are but just outside of ourselves? The two spheres, enfolded the Material and the Spiritual, if not actually contiguous, are yet parallel to each other, approaching and touching by many points. How, then, can they fail to meet and magnetize each other, especially when all the most endearing associations of the past—all the most ennobling aspirations of the future—must impel them to approach and mingle together? Nor do they meet on any distinctly defined plane, like two pieces of land, which may be contiguous, without viewing or intermingling; but they are confluent oceans, feeling, feeding, moving and inspiring the great and common tidal flow, that marks the pulses of but one Heart, and acknowledges the presence of but one Life. But this is trenching on a deep, and it may be dangerous philosophy, which, as yet, seems to be out rather too early for this drowsy world. When shall the truly earnest seeker receive instruction which shall be at once so direct and truthful as to bring all this shadowy speculation into the plane of a tangible demonstration? It must come, and that before long, because the world not only needs it, but is beginning to recognize its greatest want.

But as for Mary, from whom I have thus theoretically wandered away—perhaps wisely, for it seems worse than idle for my thoughts to dwell on her so continually—I will say no more. For I must know.

GROTON, June 17.—I have seen her; and O, if she was beautiful before, how surpassingly lovely she is now! The very type of all that most admire and love in woman. Her feelings toward me are a perfect enigma. She has a lover, I am told, who is more pertinacious than his fellows; for she has had many, and will not be said nay. I think her affections must be bestowed somewhere; for she is greatly changed. I fear I have an unpleasant effect on her; for now she almost always seems saddened by my presence. I must find out, if this is true; and if she has given her heart to a worthy object—one who deserves her love, and can reciprocate it—she shall be made happy at all hazards, and despite of the most cruel sacrifice.

No; I am not as selfish as I feared; for I begin to take pleasure in this thought. To make Mary happy, even in the arms of another, is something worth living for. She must be loved as if she were my sister—nay! as if she were my daughter; and I will make her my chief heir. But she shall never know the devotion of heart and soul she has awakened. It would not be best; or it may be not entirely safe. Where am I wandering again? At all events, she shall be left perfectly free. I will never constrain her generous nature. I will even strive patiently with this terrible suspense.

June 30.—I have seen but very little of Mary for the last three days. How should I dare to see her, with the heart fluttering its wings, as if to escape with every word? And she has seemed equally to avoid me. I do not think, however, she really does wish to avoid me, only that I so palpably run away from her, common dignity seems to demand that she should be even with me. This is all very weak and unmanly—downright silly, it seems, as I now look at it. I will have no more of these poor, miserable, practical lies. I will walk up to the mark squarely, and, whatever is there, dare to meet it, though it be one of the severest tests by which poor weak human nature is ever tried. I am to hear and pronounce a decision on the claims of a rival.

EVENING.—I have seen him. He is really a noble fellow, proud and handsome as a young Apollo. He has the indirect favor of the mother, and Mary's other friends; but, as I learn, of a positive encouragement from herself. Is it possible that such a generous, truthful, high-minded girl, as she appears, can be a coquette—can stoop to any crooked ways of conducting this most important of all negotiations? I will not—I cannot believe it. She had referred him to me; and, in return, I have promised him to use my best influence in his behalf. Shall I be able to accomplish this truly and honorably? I shall struggle to do so.

It may be that she shrinks from being longer a burden to me; for her lover, who is wealthy, has proposed to educate her brother, and provide a home for the mother. She never was a burden. O, would I might tell her that she has been nothing but the joy, the sunshine, the bloom, the fragrance, the living fountain of delight, to a life before barren, cold and joyless! But I will not, for such a disclosure might constrain her; and she must be free. I will seek her and learn the truth. This intolerable anxiety must be cut short.

June 21.—This afternoon Mary took her little becoming white sun-bonnet, as if for a walk. I asked permission to accompany her. She blushed, but seemed pleased with the proposal; and I attended her. Our way led through one of the loveliest landscapes in this pleasant region. A fair little nook in the beautiful valley of the Nashua was shut in by the surrounding hills, and overshadowed by venerable elms and walnut trees, dotting the greensward far as the eye could reach, with here and there a willow bending over the clear stream, as if attracted by the image of its own delicacy and grace. It seemed as if Nature, herself, were enchanted. In certain dominant and engrossing moods of mind, how easily we bring external things into sympathy with our selves! The squirrel skipped from tree to tree, chirping merrily, as if in welcome. The flowers never before seemed so sweet, so brilliant. The birds sang madrigals; and winds and waters murmured in monotonous measures, fine, sweet and spiritual.

Until we arrived at this place, we were silent, or spoke only in dry and formal commonplaces. But when seated, side by side, on a mossy rock, I felt instinctively that we had come nearer to establishing an intelligence. But for the whole world, and every-

thing in it—for the hope of salvation, I would not have dared touch the rosy tip of one of her fingers. I almost forgot the errand on which I had dispatched myself. But I nerved my heart to the utmost and opened the subject. I was even cold and rigid in the mentorships to which I had constrained myself. The poor girl grew pale and red by turns, and was greatly agitated. I plead the cause of her admirer, as if my own life were to pay the forfeit of his failure.

She did not speak until I had quite finished; and not then for some time.

"You do not answer me," I suggested. "I have promised that your decision shall be obtained."

"Do you really wish me to marry him?" she asked; and as she spoke she blushed and turned away her face, tearing to pieces a small flower.

"I would put no constraint on your wishes, my dear Mary," I replied. "Act according to the dictates of your own true and generous heart."

"O," she cried, "I am a poor girl! I and all that belong to me are greatly indebted to you."

"Spare me, I beg of you, any remarks of that kind!" I responded.

"Nay," she answered, "I must speak the truth. We are indebted to you for all that we are—for all that we are capable of becoming. I have been sometimes almost tempted to marry Mr. Jones, that I might relieve you of this burden; that I might even do something toward repaying the great debt we owe you. But I really cannot bear to think of it. Indeed, I feel as if it would be very wrong. But if I could only be here always! I am so happy! I could work for mother, and help John with his education."

"Say no more!" I cried, grasping her hand, for I could no longer control myself. It trembled. Her whole frame shook. The tremor was communicated. I strove in vain to strengthen myself against it.

"You owe me nothing!" I responded. "On the contrary, I am indebted to you for all the true happiness I have ever known. I would now repay you by making you happy, in any way by which it may be accomplished. Tell me, then, and tell me truly, why you have refused an offer which appears every way so desirable? Why are you insensible to attractions that most others would consider irresistible?"

She drew her hand away. She clasped it with the other. She lifted her hands and eyes toward heaven. Every tint of color had forsaken her cheeks. She was pale as marble; but her expression was sublimed by the deep solemnity of the testimony she was about to give to a degree I had never witnessed before. "I cannot love him," she said, "because I love another—truly, dearly, intensely, and eternally, I LOVE ANOTHER."

"And who is he? Tell me, I conjure you! Tell me, honestly, I demand of you!" My voice sounded cold and harsh even to myself; but I was brought to that pitch of suffering that recognized nothing of forms. I was maddened by the question I seemed so coldly posing.

The arms fell as if she had been shot. The eyes, abashed, sought the ground; and then, as if in the strength of a better and truer purpose, they sought mine. They were living wells of truth. A new world opened in their liquid depths—a world of hope, love, divine joy. I asked no more. The radiant embrace, the long and thrilling kiss, that sealed our destiny, only could, and only did, speak of affection, pure as the love of angels, and eternal as the life of the soul.

July 30, 1845.—This is the second anniversary of our marriage; and at this moment Mary is teaching our boy to walk. He is very forward for his age—only ten months. The round, toddling foot, the outstretched, balancing arms, and all the instinctive struggle after a true equilibrium! One of the most beautiful sights in the world, even when the little hero is not our own—I mean Mary's and mine. He falls now and we have music, but not the merriest. Up and try it again! "A chip of the old block!" cries grandfather, who has dropped his newspaper to enjoy the scene.

"One step—two, three steps, all alone!" cries the delighted mother; and thereupon she pours out upon him such a flood of kisses as fairly make the little fellow catch his breath, as if in the vain attempt to swallow them all.

Now he comes, steeper, stronger, closer, closer! I stretch my hand! I grasp and clasp him, and Mary clasps us both together, laughing and crying by turns, in her wild delight at the young hero's triumph. But he, poor little fellow! looks from face to face, and, seeing such demonstrations, squares his lips and cries—lustily, too, as if he wanted to assure us of the good sound lungs we have given him. So do our tears ever follow fast in the track of smiles.

August 10, 1866.—After an unclouded union of twenty-one years, during which time I have been permitted to share every good thought and deed, and walk in the closest fellowship with one of the noblest women upon earth, I can truly say that I never saw one moment when I did not bless the hour that gave to my arms my Mary, the little street-sweeper. She is a matron now; and I am a hale youth of nearly threescore; but who says we are old, or ever shall be? There is no decay, no death to the truly loving! OUR BRIDAL ROSE IS AN AMARANTH.

A LITTLE GIRL, whose uncle is connected with a livery establishment, and whose only idea of a stable is connected with that sort of an institution, on first going to Sabbath School, was informed where Christ was born, and promised to remember. On returning the next Sabbath, and the question being asked, she boldly replied, with the conscious pride of complete comprehension, "In a livery stable!"

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Phenomenal Facts.

Under this head we propose to give, from time to time, such accounts as may reach us, of all the various phenomena of Spiritualism, and also a recital of current facts taking place under our own observation. It is contended, by those who have never witnessed these wonderful manifestations, that they have no foundation in fact, but are either the effect of imagination, or, if they do actually take place, are easily referable to natural occurrences which remain unexplained. Now, we do not deny that these phenomena are strictly in accordance with natural law; for we believe them to be so. But we do most positively deny that they are either unexplained or inexplicable, and that imagination has anything to do with their production. We have too many eye and ear witnesses, of reliability, whose evidence would be taken on other subjects in any court in the land, and who will support us in our assertion that communications from departed spirits do reach the inhabitants of earth in all sorts of ways, strange as well as familiar, and that their number and importance are constantly increasing. In California, these communications have not been so numerous as in other parts of the world, because of the lack of media sufficiently developed for the purpose. But, even here, enough has been seen and heard by attentive and truthful observers, to convince the most skeptical of the reality of spirit life and spirit communion. Absorbed in the pursuit of material wealth, the people of this coast have not been so readily attracted to the subject as the more studious and thoughtful minds of the Eastern States. As our population becomes more sedate and stationary, Spiritualism will acquire greater interest for those who take the trouble of thinking for themselves, and whose opinions are formed without reference to the views of others.

Next week, we will relate some interesting occurrences, which have taken place in California, and the witnesses of which are still living, and ready to testify to the truth of the relation. Some of these manifestations occurred a few years ago, and others more recently. Many are constantly taking place at the present time, and we shall use our best exertions to obtain a recital of them for publication.

More Sabbatarian Fuss.

An evening paper of this city has a report of the prosecution, in the Police Court, of the Risley troupe of Japanese acrobats, for giving a theatrical performance on Sunday. Thomas Maguire, Professor Risley, and three of the Japanese acrobats, were charged with having violated the Sunday law, in giving a Japanese acrobatic performance at the Academy of Music last Sunday evening. The case came up in the Police Court, when the counsel for defendants announced his intention of demurring to the complaint on the ground that the performance given by the Japanese was not such as the law intended to prohibit. He took the ground that the opening of a theatre, under the law, meant the giving of an entertainment in dramatic dialogue, and that the exhibitions of acrobatic feats do not come within the meaning of the statute. In this case there was no curtain raised, no scenery used, but the performance was in every respect similar to that of the Turn-Verein Association and Olympic Club; and that any parties who amuse themselves and others, by giving acrobatic performances on Sunday, were as liable to arrest. The counsel contended that the lecture of Mrs. Cuppy at Maguire's Opera House, and the performance of the *Stabat Mater* at the Metropolitan, were just as much infringements of the law as the exhibition given by the Japanese. The exhibition must be either noisy or barbarous, or the theater must have been opened for the purpose of giving a theatrical entertainment, before the complaint could lie. He contended that it was the purpose of the Legislature, in passing the law, to prohibit only such Sunday amusements as were calculated to affect public morality. It was agreed between the Prosecuting Attorney and counsel for defendant that the performance consisted of gymnastic and acrobatic exercises and exhibitions in necromancy, and that the exhibition was given in a theater.

The more this ridiculous Sunday law is attempted to be enforced, the greater opposition and defeat will it meet at the hands of the people. It is too late in the century to carry religious tyranny so far, and with so high a hand. Let the voters get one chance at identification of those who support such a law in the Legislature, and they will surely soon be "wiped out" as legislators. Innocent recreation and amusement on Sunday the people are determined to have, all the churches and ministerial associations to the contrary notwithstanding.

THE OLDEST PAPER IN AMERICA.—We have been gratified with a perusal of a late number of the *Newport* (R. I.) *Mercury*, kindly handed us by Capt. John Hammond, and were agreeably struck with the coincidence of this meeting of the oldest and youngest in our sanctum. We could not help wishing as long and honorable a life for our paper, though we cannot claim so distinguished an origin; for the *Newport Mercury* was established by Benjamin Franklin, A. D. 1758. The number before us is the 5,644th, the present volume the 108th, and the date November 15th, 1866.

WM. T. BAILEY, editor of the *Free South*, an anti-slavery paper published at Newport, Ky., before the war, and destroyed by a mob, has recovered a verdict of \$2,500 against the city for the destruction of his property.

The Philosophy of Religious Revivals.

We continue our dissertation upon this subject from the point where we left it in our last issue; but, before entering fully upon the discussion, we will make a few prefatory remarks. Some of our religious friends may think that we are lacking in reverence for religious things. But it is not so. On the contrary, we have ever had the greatest reverence for true religion, and love for our Divine Father. Yet, do not for a moment suppose that we entertain the least particle of veneration for that horrid, barbarous idea of God taught by popular theology as the dogmatic basis of religion, which idea has no other foundation than the mythological errors of the past. Of such is the belief in the fall of man, total depravity, original sin, a vicarious atonement, an old king-devil, an angry and revengeful God, and a never-ending hell. No others than poor weak-minded, bigoted people would for a moment conscientiously entertain those absurdities, with the light of the nineteenth century shining all around them. Nor do we wish to be understood as believing in the plenary inspiration of that book of ancient fables, than which no book in the world contains a larger amount of error, even according to Christian testimony. We are willing to believe whatever we find in it that appears to us to be true; not because it is in that book, but simply because of its intrinsic truth. But some one asks, What is your standard of truth? We reply, Our own reason. We know of no other. It is the only, true, God-given standard; whoever proves recreant to this Divine guide, is a traitor to the highest and holiest trust ever committed to the human race.

But we come now to our subject. At the close of our first article, we left the young convert in a state of ecstatic bliss, praising God for salvation. We had carefully traced the course pursued, step by step, from the incipient condition up to the point where the desired end was attained. And we challenge any individual to show a single movement there recounted which is not in strict accordance with the laws of Mesmerism and Psychology. This we will prove, we think, to the satisfaction of every scientific and logical mind, in future articles, when we shall come to speak of the operation of those laws as the producing cause of all the phenomena of conversion. The winter season is generally selected, as the most propitious time for running these revival mills, where they polish souls and prepare them for glory. This is owing to the fact, probably, that the people generally have more leisure at that season of the year than at any other. It is especially so in rural districts. After continuing these revivals from four days to six weeks, as the circumstances may appear favorable to success, they are obliged to give them up from sheer exhaustion. But who is exhausted? Is it God? By no means, if He be infinite. Then it must be the people who are exhausted. And how comes that about, if God does all the work? Is it not rather strange that God should do all the work, and yet that His people should be "used up," with excess of labor also? But this contradiction does not amount to much in the aggregate of theological inconsistencies, and we will therefore let it pass.

The time has arrived when the pastors must commence gathering into the fold the lambs of the flock. This is often a source of a great amount of amusement to the outside world; especially when there is a partnership in the concern of different denominations. Each is anxious to have its full share of the lambs; and often, while the shepherds are quarrelling over their division, the wolves get in and make sad havoc among the flocks. The Methodists receive them on trial for six months, and, dividing them into classes of ten or twelve each, appoint a leader over them, whose duty it is to meet them once a week and inquire what the Lord is doing for their souls. He calls upon them, one at a time, by name, to arise and state what their experience has been during the past week. If they happen to be on Pisgah's top, and, with glib tongue and ready, flowing style, tell a good story, the leader is well pleased, and manifests his pleasure by sundry responses; such as, "Bless God!" "Praise the Lord!" And sometimes, when the enthusiasm runs very high, they all shout, with one accord, "Glory! Hallelujah! Glory to God!" etc. etc. But if a soul happens to be "in a tried condition," as they call it, and tells a pitiful story of temptations and trials and severe conflicts with that old adversary, the Devil, then half-futtered groans and ejaculatory prayers are heard, and a deep sensation of sympathy runs through the whole company. Words of encouragement are uttered by the leader to the tried and trembling soul; such as, "Pray on, fight on, my brother, (or sister, as may be,) God will give you the victory at last, if you only trust in Him." If there were indeed a change of the heart, a work of grace in the soul—if, as they testify, old things had passed away, and all things were become new—what means this terrible conflict all the while? Does not the fact of its existence prove that there has been no radical change? At most, it is but a resolution to try to do better, hastily formed, under the psychological excitement occurring at the time.

Now let us turn our attention to the character of the leader; for we must bear in mind that he is the moving power. On examination, we find that the class of individuals selected as leaders are simply miniature evangelists. They are not as strong psychologists as are clergymen, but possess a good deal of that kind of power. Although the daily meetings are closed, yet what is commonly "the means of grace" is constantly supplied in the form of evening meetings, the class-meeting, the young men's prayer-meeting, the church prayer-meeting, etc. etc. Thus the work goes steadily on, and a growth in grace is claimed to be the result.

But soon old Sol starts on his northern tour again, and white-haired Winter calmly slides from his icy throne into the flowery lap of Spring. The little rills, that have been so long bound in a frozen grasp, begin to sing, dance, and play; the sweet little crocuses come peeping out from under the melting snow, with smiling faces; the buds on the trees begin to swell; and old mother Nature commences arraying herself in emerald robes, and thus gives evidence of returning life. The husbandman is warned, by these unfailing signs, that the days are near when he must plow and

sow, if in the Autumn days he would reap his harvest. And when the husbandman begins to move in his calling, the mechanic must move too, in order to supply the necessary implements of agriculture. Under the heavy pressure of the cares of every-day life, the "means of grace" are partially neglected; and, as the days of heavy toil roll on, they are finally abandoned altogether, and eight-tenths of the streams of grace that began to flow in January have run dry by the middle of July. Now, if it were God's work, He could run them through July and hot weather just as well as in frozen January; but, being only man's, and solely of a mesmeric character, so soon as all the appliances stop, the work stops also. In our next, we shall "show up" some of the deleterious effects of revivals.

Bishop Kip's Bull Again.

There are some individuals who take our article on Bishop Kip's Bull in high dudgeon. They are filled with astonishment amounting to indignation, that we have so little reverence for holy things as to lay our unholy hands on God's anointed. Well, friends, we were once a clergyman ourselves, perhaps that is the reason that we are not afraid of them. What Bishop Kip's private views are, is nothing to us so long as he keeps them to himself. If he wants to dance or not; if he wants to play euchre, whist, backgammon, or chess; or if he likes to take a little nice wine now and then for his stomach's sake, as Paul told Timothy to do, it is no business of ours, or of any other public journal; but when he promulgates his opinions to the world, then we have a right to criticize them. It has several times come to our ears, that we not only abused the Bishop, but we lied on the Bible. That is rich! The Bible believers do not know what is in their own Bible! Please turn to 2d Samuel, 6th chapter, 14th verse, and you will read: "And David danced before the Lord with all his might; and David girded with a linen ephod." In the 20th verse: "And Michal, the daughter of Saul, came out to meet him, and said, How glorious was the king of Israel to-day, who uncovered himself to-day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself." In the 23d verse, David replies to a justly deserved curtain lecture from his wife: "And I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight." But poor Michal! simply because she had a little native modesty, only think what she had to suffer! T.

A Specimen Christian.

The *Daily Examiner*, of this city, publishes the following:

"It is well known that a series of lectures has been projected, for the benefit of the Veteran Corps. The Committee entrusted with the management of details called upon the Rev. A. L. Stone, and requested him to deliver a lecture. He was perfectly willing to do so, provided they would pay him one hundred dollars for his services. They expostulated, but in vain; the object was a charity, certainly, but the popular preacher evidently intended to act upon the maxim that 'charity begins at home,' and as they believed he would draw a full house, they consented to his terms. The appointed evening came, and it poured with rain. The streets were filled with mud, the storm was steady and persistent, and the lecture was delivered almost to empty benches. Some forty or fifty persons, however, were present, and the Committee found on balancing their accounts, that they had not received enough to pay their expenses. They went to Dr. Stone, and told him how matters stood; of course they had agreed to pay him \$100, and if he insisted upon it, they must do so. But he would be pleased to receive from the sum he had calculated upon, a sum of \$100, and he should be glad to receive the money. He didn't know anything about charity—a sum had been bargained for, and he expected it. They paid him \$100, and so were out of pocket by that \$175, and the reverend faculty went on his way rejoicing. Last night the Hon. Newton Booth delivered a most interesting lecture before the same Corps, and refused to receive one cent for his services. The Hon. Newton Booth was a popular preacher, and was called upon for the funds of the Veteran Corps, and perhaps just as fortunately for the ears of his audience last evening. If there is any moral to be deduced from this little story, our readers may apply it for themselves."

In that big book which the Rev. Dr. Stone professes to take as the foundation of his faith, we read that "he that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord." We wonder how much borrowed money the Lord owes the Dr. now? How very charitable popular theology does make its advocates! T.

Concentrated Religious Fastidiousness.

We learn from an exchange that the clergymen of Norwich, Conn., have issued a circular, expressing their determination to attend no more funerals on the Sabbath, except in cases of absolute necessity. They object to the practice, as being a clear violation of the Fourth Commandment, both from the amount of work it involves, and on account of keeping so many people from attending the church services. Had those clergymen not better issue another circular, forbidding people dying on Sunday, because of "the amount of work it involves," in laying them out and preparing them for the grave? And another circular is needed, reverend sirs, to enable you to dispense with those richly cooked dinners, which so please holy palates on Sunday, and to give the poor tired domestics one day of rest in seven. It may be obtuseness on our part, but we are unable to discover how the Fourth Commandment may be broken any more readily by saying a few comforting words to mourning friends around the inanimate form of their loved one, than in uttering theological denunciations from a panoplied pulpit. T.

We admire the good taste manifested by the *Dramatic Chronicle*, in the kindly notice which it gave of the BANNER OF PROGRESS, on Tuesday last. It contrasts so sharply with the unkind, bigoted, and egotistical remarks of other journals, which we will not name. The *Chronicle* is the most spicy sheet in the State, and we appreciate a compliment from such a source.

JO KEHR says the secular press are so very religious when obliged to refer to the subject of Spiritualism, and exhibit such a holy horror in view of its progress, that he is in doubt whether they are not all religious papers.

DOES the astute editor of the *California* expect to live out half the days allotted to man, after being delivered of such a ponderous criticism as that one of his on the BANNER OF PROGRESS? T.

Life's Trials.

I'll never shrink away from bitter pain,
But give me holy strength to bear.

Whilst passing through the trials and darkness, losses and crosses of this life, we think them hard to bear; but from the standpoint of future years, we look back upon life's history, and can each say, like one of old, "It has been good for me that I have been afflicted." Hours of intense suffering are the Gethsemanes and Calvaries of our lives. And all who have implicit confidence in our heavenly Father can see the glorious sunlight of a happy resurrection morning, all roseate with immortal hope, streaming over the mountain top, even whilst they, bent beneath the weight of the cross, are struggling up its rugged sides. It is only in experience's bitter school that we gain the wisdom which enables us to solve the great problems of life, and approximate to a correct solution of the grand problems of immortality.

Take for an illustration, individuals who have been cradled in the lap of luxury—the fruition of every desire has far exceeded their fondest anticipations—what do they know of the actualities of life? Their ephemeral existence adds nothing to the world's store in the arts, sciences, literature or religion. And when they pass to the other side of the Jordan of death, the world does not weigh one ounce the less in moral worth or mental power. Their lives are of less worth than that of the butterfly that sports in the summer sunbeam, and kisses the smiling face of every flower it sees, and lives out its one day of ecstatic bliss. This lovely specimen of winged life appeals to our idealism, and teaches us a lesson of the beautiful. But whoever knew anything beautiful produced by the drones of society? Alas! how little they know of the adverse circumstances that surround their fellow-beings, and go to make up the warp of an active and noble life! And how ignorant they are of the toils and struggles, the burning tears, and disappointed hopes, the bitter groans, as, drop by drop, the red wine of life is crushed out of the fiercely palpitating heart; the sighs, the cries, yea, all these things that diversify and make up the woof that is daily being woven into the web of our lives! Many thanks to our heavenly Father, and the angel world, that there are so many noble souls who have passed through the fiery crucible of suffering, and have been made strong to labor in the holy work of human elevation! But there is a time coming, in the golden future, when we shall cease to sigh and weep—when the tired hands, and weary feet, and aching heart, shall find rest. We shall find it in the arms of our loved ones on the other side of the river. They are "waiting," as the poet has it, "until the shadows are a little longer grown."

"We are calmly waiting," say the aged ones who are standing on the banks of that darkly flowing stream, and watching, with their fast-dimming eyes, to see if they cannot catch a glimpse in the offing of that mariner's sail, that is to bear them to the opposite shore. They want to rest in the arms of their dear ones. O, what a magic power there is in these words! "Rest, in the arms of our loved ones!" Pass them along the line of humanity, where her serried ranks are battling with life's ill to day!

How many an eye brightens, and how many a tired heart catches up the soothing strain, and it becomes their future talisman, until life's changing scenes are all played, and the actors leave for the shining shore. Who shall describe the rapturous joy of that hour, when we shall cross the river of death and find our loved one waiting on the thither side, to welcome us to their homes forever, where we shall be permitted to press heart to heart, and enfold each other in one lingering embrace! Where our lips shall press upon their flower-crowned brows our first, fond, loving kiss of immortality! Then, side by side with them, shall our feet walk the starry floor of eternal glory; while the soft, mellow light, that floweth so sweetly and musically out of the fountain of bliss, shall cast an angelic halo all around, which shall portray our spirits as they are. And there, in that magic mirror, the tears shed in our earthly life shall change to glittering pearls, and toil to gold. Every sigh, and every pain, shall change to rubies that shall sparkle and flash with an undimmed lustre. And all our heart-anguish shall become a fountain of sweet odors that shall make the atmosphere redolent with an unspeakable richness of perfume.

Russia a Progressive State.

Rapid advances in social and political reform are being made in Russia. When the Polish insurrection was going on, the French and British press abused her, eulogizing "the generous Poles struggling for their freedom." Polish freedom, however, like that of Hungary before 1849, was a shadow without the substance. The Polish nobility, who held the poor, as feudal serfs attached to the land, in the most abject condition, were harder and more cruel toward them than Russia had ever been. The Lithuanian peasantry were held to perpetual service, in a condition, physically and intellectually, far below that of the average of American slaves. But recently the wise and humane Czar abolished this feudal serfage and freed all the slaves of Poland, as he had before freed those of Russia. M.

MORE HEALING BY LAYING ON OF HANDS.—The disciples of this ancient system of healing begin to increase in our city. The reason must be found in the fact that the healers by this practice are successful beyond all others. Our friend, M. L. Winn, whose card appears in another column, seems to be meeting with great success by this method. He says he is curing a number of exceedingly difficult cases.

JO KEHR says there is a *California* lion in this city, from whose mouth proceed strange utterances for a lion. He says they come forth weakly. We fear that Jo is mistaken in the animal, and advise him to examine his ears.

AN editor thus logically nudges his delinquent subscribers: "We don't want money desperately bad; but our creditors do, and no doubt owe you. If you pay us, we'll pay them, and they'll pay you."

THE destiny of the future depends upon the moral and intellectual strength of the present.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE "AMERICAN FLAG."

MESSRS. EDITORS:—It is proper that you, who are just embarking on a sea full of whirlpools and adverse currents, should pay a passing tribute to that fearless advocate of human rights and example of stern patriotism, the "AMERICAN FLAG," and to revert to its noble career and unflinching political record during the dark days of the Slaveholders' Rebellion. "No compromise with traitors!" was the spirit of its pages, which magnetized the hearts of its readers as with a "live coal," plucked from the altar of Divinity. And that spirit "still lives," and its echoes find a response in thousands of souls on both sides of the continent, and in hundreds of homes whose sacred altars caught living inspiration from its burning eloquence. And ever, when speaking of the great political issues of the day, and advocating the rights of the laboring masses against the monopoly of wealth and its corresponding aristocracy, it towered to the attitude of a giant, in comparison to which all its compeers dwindled into pigmies. And thus it will ever stand in the minds of its readers, a bright halo encircling its noonday glory. Radical and progressive, even advocating the rights of the weak against the strong, we look in vain for its equal in our midst.

Yes, noble "FLAG," if err you did, it was in not following out the old adage, that "truth should not at all times be spoken." Had you flattered, and fawned, and imitated the example of your contemporaries, who doubts that your standard would still be waving in the breeze?

We, as Spiritualists, owe a debt of gratitude to the "AMERICAN FLAG"; for when no other voice was heard to speak for us in the city, and hardly any in the State, a space was never refused in its columns, where we might advocate our own cause. And may we never forget the favor, nor be unmindful of its cost. To the noble few, who heroically, and through untold trials, braved the peculiar antagonisms always attendant on those who advocate great principles in advance of others, and suffer for the time in proportion to the magnitude of their work, we will ever have a word of encouragement and cheer. And let them be assured that, wherever their "FLAG" has waved, its influence has been felt, and its strong devotion to freedom appreciated. Even now, it stands forth a living embodiment of principles which coming time will endow with new lustre, that no enemy can efface. Float on, then, high exponent of human Justice and Right, in the future as in the past, in the minds of all true patriots and lovers of Republican Liberty! While the graphic inscriptions of true eloquence that adorned thy pages, some of which have already been translated into other tongues, shall be engrafted into the literature of the age, and become a legacy to future generations. ARRIVE.

It is with unfeigned pleasure that we give the above a place in our columns. We feel it to be a just and merited tribute to the *Flag* for the truly noble spirit of liberality that characterized its managers, and for its straight-forward advocacy of human freedom, in comparison with the bigoted, namby-pamby, whiffing course pursued by many of its contemporaries. T.

Organization.

EDITORS BANNER OF PROGRESS:—Will you permit me to ask you one or two questions: Do you consider organization necessary to the spread of Spiritualism? ENQUIRER.

We would say to "Enquirer," that if he means, by organization, an association on a financial basis for the purpose of procuring lecturers and purchasing liberal books, our answer is, Yes. But if he means, by organization, a promulgation of a creed containing specific articles of faith by which any individual mind is to be trammelled in any direction whatever in its search after truth, we answer, No!—most emphatically, No! If any one is so weak as to need such help, "let him tarry at Jericho until his beard be grown." Religious bigotry and sectarianism are the spawn of creeds and formulas. The moment an individual subscribes to a creed he tacitly admits that he has reached a finality; that nothing lies beyond to be discovered; he immediately commences a work of fortification, and rampart on rampart rises around his position; and as soon as he feels himself secure from outside attacks, he gives himself over to rest, having no desire to make further attainment. He now becomes completely stereotyped in his ideas, and not only looks with distrust, but with actual hatred, upon any innovation that may be attempted upon his sacred religious ideas. We will refer to this subject again ere long. T.

A New Communist Enterprise.

We have received a letter from a friend of social reform in Tuolumne City, Stanislaus County, representing that he has secured a location, in a healthy, fertile region, on the San Joaquin river, in Stanislaus county, California, and invites a correspondence with those who would like to co-operate with him in establishing a "Community" of congenial minds, on the basis of Unity of Interests and Equality of the Sexes, governed by "free criticism." Every member is guaranteed a supply for all their physical wants, and the means of a most thorough and complete education, as soon as the conditions can be established. Parties interested in this phase of reform can address M. E. Morse, care of Covert & Co., as above. M.

EFFECT OF SUNDAY LAWS.—A man who rides on the cars in Massachusetts on Sunday, must do so upon his own temporal as well as eternal risk and responsibility. Judge Ames, of the Superior Court, recently gave a decision in the case of Patrick Stanton, who sues the Metropolitan Rail Road Company for damages in the sum of \$2,000 for injuries received by being thrown from defendants' car on Sunday, the 19th of November, 1865, whereby one of his legs were broken, owing, as alleged, to the carelessness and neglect of defendants' agent. The Judge decides that the plaintiff was not lawfully riding on the Sabbath in question, his mission not being one of necessity or charity, but only one of pleasure; and hence he would not be entitled to recover damages.

"WHEN a man treats me with want of respect," said a philosophical poor man, "I comfort myself with the reflection that it is not myself that he slighted, but an old shabby coat and hat, which, to say the truth, have no particular claims to admiration. So if my hat and coat choose to fret about it, let them—but it is nothing to me."

PHILOSOPHICAL.

INCARNATE DEITIES.

The history of Egypt affords us an account of one of the origins of the idea of incarnate divinity, of which the Christian incarnation is simply a copy. I say one of the origins, because the early history of Greece affords several prototypes of Deific incarnations; and the Christna of the Buddhists is, perhaps, the most direct lineal prototype. Indeed, there is no better established fact, or principle, than that, in any separate locality where man has arisen from a savage or aboriginal condition to a considerable degree of intellectual culture and development, being essentially homogeneous, he passes through certain religious and intellectual phases, which are strikingly similar. Among these phases sun and star worship and Deific incarnation are conspicuous. From the geographical position, being in separate localities, but little influenced by other nationalities, we have reason to think that these incarnations were original conceptions or outgrowths of human unfoldment in Egypt, Mesopotamia, India and Peru. The Greeks probably borrowed the idea as they did many of the germs of their mythology, from Egypt. But, with the Hebrews of Palestine, at the date of our era, it could not possibly have been an original conception. Its geographical position, being on the highway of nations, midway between several older centers of human development, and the date of the occurrence being long centuries after the prevalence of the dogma in those centers, conclusively stamp it as a second-hand copy. Sir Wm. Jones, in his "Asiatic Researches," says: "In the Sanscrit Dictionary, compiled more than two thousand years ago, we have the whole story of the incarnate Deity born of a virgin, and miraculously escaping in his infancy from the reigning tyrant of his country."

Draper, in his "Intellectual Development of Europe," says that, in early Egypt, "it was held that not only has God never appeared upon earth in the human form, but that such is altogether an impossibility, since He is the animating principle of the entire universe, visible nature being only a manifestation of Him. But Osiris, Ptah, Amun, were impersonations of certain attributes, as we speak of the Creator, the Almighty. These various attributes were arranged in trinities, the third member being a procession from the others; thus, from Osiris and Isis proceeded Horus. It was admitted that there had been terrestrial manifestations of these Divine attributes for the salvation of men. Thus Osiris was incarnate in the flesh; he fell a sacrifice to the evil principle, and, after his death and resurrection, became the appointed judge of the dead. Their dogma of Divine incarnation obliged them to assert that there had been a fall of man to obtain a logical justification of prodigies so great. At his judgment, after death, if the good deeds predominated, the spirit was dismissed to the Elysian Fields, Aahlu; if his evil, he was condemned to transmigration."

Here we have the origin of the Trinity, the Fall, the incarnate Redeemer, who is also judge of souls after death, the Judgment Day, Heaven and Hell as separate localities.

It is well known that the Egyptians had a double creed—one for the learned, and one for the vulgar; and that these ideas were concessions to accommodate the dark minds of the low populace, who were unable to comprehend the more sublime and truthful conceptions of the priests. It is certainly a humiliating reflection, that, after the lapse of so many centuries—after the unparalleled progress in science and mechanics, and the triumph of mind over material nature—and after the American people have had the mental vigor and self-reliance to repudiate the old world doctrines of the divine right of kings, priests and nobles, and found their government on the equal rights of man—we should so far prostrate our intellects as to still receive as current religious truth the essential system of dogmas, which, in the dawn of mental unfoldment in remote Egyptian civilization, was a concession of the priests to the ignorance and superstition of the populace; and that, with us, it is not merely the ignorant, who hold such dogmas, but the learned also; and that they are the leading religious influence of nine-tenths of the institutions of learning (except professional institutions) in our country above the grade of public schools. How long, O Reason and Common Sense! how long?

JOHN ALLYN.

A PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW OF THE RELIGIONS OF MANKIND.

NUMBER TWO.

Thus, law-givers, like Moses; poets, like David; fortune-tellers, like Samuel; and all men of more than ordinary intelligence, were sure to be recognized as men inspired of God. Many very good mechanics and farmers labored under inspiration. The book of Isaiah, 38th chapter, 23d to 29th verse, says: "Give ye ear and hear my voice; hearken, and hear my speech. Doth the plowman plow all day to sow? doth he open and break the clods of ground? When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cummin, and cast in the principal wheat and the appointed barley and the rie in their place? For his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth treat him. For the fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is a cart wheel turned about upon the cummin, but the fitches are beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod. Bread corn is bruised; because he will not ever be threshing it, nor break it with the wheel of his cart, nor bruise it with his horsemen. This also cometh from the Lord of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working." Read also Exodus, 35th chap., 30th to 35th verse, and 36th chapter, 1st to 4th verse; 2d Chronicles, 1st chapter, 7th to 12th verse. This reduces inspiration to a low level indeed; for if excellence in anything presupposes inspiration, inspiration, then, is a very common gift, not at all confined to nations, sects, or individuals; nor is piety, or even good morals, necessary to the recipient. Compare our steam threshing machines with the clumsy implements of the inspired farmer of Isaiah's days! If he was inspired, what are we to say of our modern inventors? Is it not likely that the

revelation entertained for the Bible originated in the ignorance of a superstitious people? that it required no more inspiration than to plow and farm well, than it does now; to write the books of the Bible, than it does to write the history of the United States; nor so much as is manifested in the writings of Aristotle, Bacon, Shakspeare, or any of our many master writers?

The New Testament says: "Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Can any one tell what that means? When any one is moved by the Holy Ghost to speak or write, in what do they differ? And was it superior to the inspiration claimed by other nations? to the Grecian Sibyl:

"Who, with an accent more than mortal, spoke,
Her staring eyes with sparkling fury roll,
When all the god came rushing on her soul?"

to the inspiration of Zoroaster, Mohammed, Swedenborg, Joseph Smith, or A. J. Davis? The Irvingites and the Mormons speak in unknown tongues, under an influence they are pleased to call the Holy Ghost; the Methodists and others, in revival meetings, act not unlike the ancient sibyl, when they receive the Holy Ghost. Do all these parties partake of the inspiration of the Holy Ghost? All agree in one thing—though they may not agree in defining what the Holy Ghost is, whether a person, substance, influence or principle—and that is something only understood by the recipient. And no sect will allow its opponents to be influenced by the genuine Holy Ghost; yet each knows by the inward testimony of the Spirit that they are in possession of, and are influenced by, the only genuine Spirit of God. But whatever this Holy Ghost may be, what proof have we that "holy men of old" spake and wrote by it? And, granting that they were under its influence, did it render what they said more true, more clear to our perceptions, more plain to our understanding? If it does not enlighten our reason, of what use is it? That it does not, is plain from such statements as, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2: 14.) No use, then, to appeal to us as rational beings, for to be rational is to be natural; but to be natural-minded is to be incapable of receiving the things of God. If it is not to be received by reason, or the natural man, how then? By faith: that is, by gullibility—receiving without investigation. The less research, and the more faith, the greater the blessing. "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed," says St. John, 20: 29. "Shut your eyes, you sinner, and swallow!" seems to be the plain English of the whole. No wonder religion-mongers lay such a stress upon faith, making it such a meritorious thing; for it is by belief in them that they succeed, and the more the belief and less the investigation, the greater the success. They court investigation so long as that investigation is in their favor; but as soon as it throws a doubt on their dogmatic teachings, they immediately fall back on faith as "the one thing needful." We are told then that "the natural man receiveth not the things of God," "we are blinded," "governed by the Spirit of darkness," &c.

It is amusing to notice how dictatorial these spiritually inspired teachers are in matters they know nothing of. Inspired by ignorance, they are bigoted and self-conceited; scarcely understanding their own language, and presuming to speak the thoughts of the Infinite. (Acts 4: 13.) Draper, speaking of the priests of the fifth century, says: "The policy of Constantine had opened a career in the State through the Church for men of the lowest rank. Many such, indeed, had attained to the highest dignities. But they had come through other paths than true knowledge. A burning zeal animated them rather than profound learning, yet, eminent position once attained, no man stood more in need of profound wisdom. Under such circumstances, the course was very clear: to set up their own notions as final and unimpeachable truth, and to denounce as magic, theurgy, necromancy, or the sinful pursuit of vain trifling, all the learning that stood in their way." Such is the priesthood of all ages; and to submit our judgment to them would be sacrilege—a sacrificing to ignorance our noblest endowments, everything that makes man noble and great—to be the veriest slave that servility and ignorance ever governed.

But, granting that they did write and speak by the Holy Ghost, and that their utterances, thus inspired, were of higher authority, as a guide—"a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path," have we got those sayings and writings? Are we in possession of a faithfully transcribed copy? Do not, according to the best authorities, mistranslations, interpolations, and wholesale forgeries abound on every page, rendering, whatever may have been their original value, those now in our possession utterly valueless as an infallible guide? J. W. MACKIE.

IN WHAT CONSISTS THE DIFFERENCE?

NUMBER TWO.

It was stated in my previous communication that "there is, to-day, but one class of religionists on the face of the broad earth that has not had its origin in the ancient forms of astronomy and astrology." This position I desire to make good to the complete satisfaction of such as feel disposed to follow out the argument honestly and candidly, as searchers after that most precious of all gems, simple truth; which, like all beautiful things, is brightest and loveliest unadorned. It has been remarked that the history of the world is wrapt up in the statements of its wars; but, with far greater justice can it be said, that the recorded history of man is a complete history of religion. It is quite impossible to draw a line of demarcation between the religious idea of a people and their political and domestic relations—being, as they invariably are, closely and inseparably woven into one web; that the race of man, from its earliest dawn, or at least as far back as we are able to trace the matter, have been worshippers of something or other, is beyond the shadow of a doubt true, and well authenticated. And with the broad and clear light streaming in upon us at this enlightened period of time, we stand, as it were, on lofty ground, overlooking the wide chasm which separates us from the past, and peering with unbroken vision into the earliest epochs of humanity—see the forms, types, symbols, figures, and expressions in picture-

writing and hieroglyphic carving, which presents the whole panorama clearly to view, and makes us acquainted with ritualisms and ceremonials, sacrifices and altars, feasts and fasts, and all other of the ancient paraphernalia of sun, idol, fire, animal, or star worship. It may be right and proper as a preliminary measure to endeavor to establish the fact that the ancients had, to some extent, at least, a correct knowledge of the science of astronomy; that they have left for our inspection indubitable evidences of their accuracy, cannot be successfully denied at this day; and here I shall introduce a witness who will prove self-corroborative in his testimony of one essential, undeniable fact. The article is taken from the New York Sun of some five or six years ago, and is entitled "A Remarkable Statement, showing the Antiquity of Egyptian Astronomy." The time to which it points was the period that Joseph was captive there, according to Bible chronology, at which time perfection in astronomy, sculpture, and kindred arts, attained by the Egyptians, point to the fact that Egypt was even then hoary with age, and in possession of a perfect system of zodiacal, stellar, or sun worship, that must have required ages to perfect it; and that it has left its imprint on every religious system that the world has known since that time. The Jews then consisted of but one family; their descendants afterwards degenerated into barbarism, and Moses was fitted for their leader by being "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians."

"Professor O. M. Mitchell delivered, not long since, in Philadelphia, one of his splendid astronomical lectures. The following statement of a remarkable fact is given in a report of the lecture: He had not long since met, in the city of St. Louis, a man of great scientific attainments, who, for forty years, had been engaged in Egypt in deciphering the hieroglyphics of the ancients. This gentleman had stated to him that he had lately unraveled the inscriptions upon the coffin of a mummy, now in the London Museum, and in which, by the aid of previous observations, he had discovered the key to all the astronomical knowledge of the Egyptians. The zodiac, with the exact position of the planets, was delineated on this coffin, and the date to which they pointed was the autumnal equinox in the year 1723 before Christ, or nearly 3,600 years ago. Professor Mitchell employed his assistance to ascertain the exact positions of the heavenly bodies belonging to our solar system on the equinox of that year (1723 B. C.) and sent him a correct diagram of them, without having communicated his object in so doing. In compliance with this, the calculations were made, and to his astonishment, on comparing the result with the statements of his scientific friend, already referred to, it was found that on the 7th of October, 1723, before Christ, the moon and planets had occupied the exact points in the heavens marked upon the coffin in the London Museum."

It is legitimate and proper to state that ancient Masonry was one wing of mythical theology, and has its basis in astronomy; and some of its symbols, to-day, bear ample evidence of that fact; yet I apprehend no intelligent Mason would take umbrage at a knowledge of the truth of its origin being shown that revealed none of its secret workings, or damaged its fair fame in the eyes of the world, but, on the contrary, should rejoice in the acquisition of truthful knowledge, come from what quarter it may. There may be some few of the fraternity, who regard the institution as nothing more than a benevolent society, and ask for no higher knowledge in relation to it, but they, too, must learn that analysis and scrutiny into the things of the past is no longer sacred or forbidden, but demanded in a most peremptory manner as the right and immunity of the age in which we live. Investigation is the order of the day, and whatever stands in the way must consent to remove or be crushed out of existence by a power of stupendous magnitude now sweeping over the land like the living flames on a prairie of dried grass. If we happen to live in a period of time when disintegration, innovation, change, and transition is boldly written on everything and every nation under heaven, it is wisdom to conform to the situation of affairs rather than be bruised and crushed in the grooves of dark conservatism and go under through stubbornness. Being radically inclined, I love the honest innovator wherever he is to be found, and cheerfully extend to him or her the right hand of fellowship as a worker in God's great vineyard, where humanity is to be further cultivated and elevated and fitted for a higher state of existence. As to that which I require to prove my position in regard to Masonry, there is more than a supply for all my wants to be found published to the world, already, in the Monitors and other similar works; besides this, there are the working jewels of the order, bearing devices emblematic of its origin, which are worn in public processions and funeral observances through the city streets, and along the public highways, where all who choose may see for themselves. Much labor has been performed, and deep researches made in the investigation of our language; its origin; its idiomatic peculiarities and genius and adaptation to the ends of a universal application; all of which is so much added stock to the world's wealth in knowledge and power. And if the human family are, as I have said, in a transition state, and we, as a part, are affected as we must be thereby, should we not know the fact and prepare to meet whatever change time may produce? Can the three hundred and fifty millions of Buddhist worshippers lose faith in their religion, and that system become effete and nearly dead without its effects touching us—knowing, as we do, how closely the members of the race are, by virtue of their kind, knit together by ties of consanguinity? Do the three hundred millions of the followers of Mahomet, who are dying out so far as their religious faith is concerned, have no interest for us, who are undergoing a like change? If the family of man have heretofore acted on the low and groveling principle of sheer selfishness, they will yet learn that in unity and brotherhood lies the grand truth.

J. D. PIERSON.

THE opponents of Spiritualism can no longer say that a fair opportunity is not given them to investigate the Spiritual Phenomena. Mrs. Foye's seances are held regularly every Thursday evening, at Fraternity Hall, 638 Market street. We attended the last one, and witnessed manifestations that excelled anything of the same class we had ever before seen.

THE hour for meeting of the Children's Progressive Lyceum, at Congress Hall, on Sunday afternoon, will hereafter be one o'clock, instead of two, as heretofore.

The Bright and the Dark Side.

The world has many a sparkling scene,
With the spirit of gladness rife;
And bright and clear is their sunny glow
In the cloudless morn of life:
But years creep on with a stealthy pace;
Youth's vigor soon is past;
And the "thousand ills" still hovering near
Will stoop on their prey at last.

There are flowery wreaths by Angel hands,
Entwined round our youthful brow;
And while mirth and joy are soaring high,
They shine with a guided glow:
But the fountains of mirth will cease to flow
When the heart breathes forth a sigh;
And the flowers which bloom in Summer's sun
In Autumn will wither and die.

There are friends whose smiles are soft and bland
When the sky of life is clear,
Who would kindly soothe the grief-worn heart
And wipe the falling tear:
But clouds come over the fairest sky,
And storms will madden rave;
And the only changeless thing we find
Is the cold and dreamless grave.

But we read of a home in yon blue sphere,
When the turmoil of life is o'er,
Where the chilling blasts that assail us here
Shall darken the soul no more:
They say 'tis a clime of untold joys,
In fadeless splendor drest,
Where the stricken heart shall end its woes,
And the weary be at rest.

O, 'tis balm to the lone and desolate ones,
By sad affliction reared,
To know when the ocean of life is past,
They'll find a home in heaven!

WE would call the attention of the sick and afflicted among our readers to our medical advertisers' cards. There are Drs. Bryant and Winn, who heal by laying on of hands; Drs. Josselyn, Sturman, Benton, and Gould, with electricity and medicines; Madame Antonia and McLean as clairvoyants. Surely, such an array of talent and skill should be enough to frighten that old fellow called Death, and drive him vanquished from the field.

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